

THE WITNESS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER NO. 3338

**A SERMON
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*"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."
1 Corinthians 11:26*

THE center of our holy religion is the cross. The central thought of the whole of Christianity is Christ and the great point in Christ's history is His crucifixion. We preach Christ, but more—we preach Him crucified. Beloved, this, which is the keystone or the whole arch of our religion, should be more constantly in our minds than it is. It should more frequently occupy our meditations. It should engage more incessantly our tongues—we should sing of it oftener. We should pray more in the shadow for it and we should live more under the control of the impulses its suggests. In the cross of Christ let each one of us glory and like the apostle, say, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ our Lord."

In order to keep in our mind's eye what, alas! we so easily forget—the death of our blessed Lord—He has been pleased to institute the supper which we are about to celebrate. Beneath yon fair white linen cloth, we have memorials of His passion, full of instruction to those who rightly view them. If any in this place should ask, "What mean you by this service?" our ready answer shall be according as it is written—"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1Co 11:26).

We eat bread and drink wine, not out of any foolish superstition that these can be transmuted into the very flesh and blood of Jesus Christ—a superstition which would be a disgrace to a Bushman—a superstition which *is* a disgrace to those who hold it in this enlightened land, and not a disgrace only, but a vast sin—a black delusion which is given to them that they may believe a lie—whereby they involve themselves in the doom of perdition. We hold no such folly.

Because we are rational and because we are spiritual, both our reason and our spiritual nature revolt against anything so atrocious as to believe that the body of Christ—the absolute flesh and blood—can be eaten and drank, or that if it could be done it ought to be done, or that it could confer any spiritual benefit upon those who could perform so cannibal and revolting an act.

We believe in the real presence, but not in the corporeal presence. We believe that Jesus Christ spiritually comes to us and refreshes us, and in that sense we both eat His flesh and drink His blood, but as to any such literal feast as some believe in, we reject the thought with horror and with contempt.

The great meaning of "The Lord's Supper," as we call it, is that we show the Lord's death till He come. We *show it to ourselves*, and we show it, or represent it, to others—to unbelievers who may *chance to look on*. The former of these is, perhaps, the more important. In coming to eat of the bread and drink of the wine at this supper—

I. WE SHOW THE LORD'S DEATH TO OURSELVES.

Not, indeed, that this is the exclusive manner of exhibiting the passion which our dear Savior endured, or the decease which He accomplished, for there are, it must be admitted, other methods of showing the Lord's death.

One is by this Book, this inspired volume, which contains the record of His crucifixion—which explains it—which enforces upon men the duty of putting their trust in the merit of Him who died. Wherever this Bible is opened there is a showing of Christ's death. Why, the whole Book is full of it. There is a crimson line of atoning sacrifice running from Genesis to Revelation.

***"Here I behold my Savior's face
Almost in every page."***

Every distinct book of inspiration is like a mirror reflecting the image of Jesus—"as in a glass, darkly," it is true, but still sufficiently clear even for these dim eyes of ours. All the Scriptures are the swaddling bands of the child Christ Jesus, as said Augustine of old—If you would see Jesus, you must search for Him in Holy Scripture, and by the light of the Holy Ghost, you will not go far until you find Him.

The Lord Jesus Christ's death is also shown forth *in public ministry*. There are some who are so fond of painted windows, because, they say, they preach by painting. Brethren, we paint by preaching, that is the only difference, and to paint by preaching is an infinitely better thing than to preach by painting. All the methods that are adopted to show forth Christ's death throughout all the world are utter vanity compared with the ministration of the Gospel.

It is not possible for the preacher too much to magnify His office. It is God's predestinated channel of grace to the sons of men. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"—and as we speak, God helping us, Christ is set forth, manifestly crucified, amongst you. How many in this place have seen Jesus by what they have heard spoken of Him? The eye of the mind has seen Him. 'Twere of little avail for the eye of sense to do so. Thousands saw Christ with their natural eyes and perished in their sins. But to see Him with the eye of the spirit—this it is that saves. The preaching of the Gospel paints Christ to the mind's eye, not to the natural eye, so it is the best way of depicting Him, for it exactly meets the vision that it is intended to impress.

Still, over and above the showing of Christ's death in the Word printed and the Word preached, there comes in this emblematical supper in which we show Christ's death after a manner I will try to explain. We show to ourselves as we come here *that Christ was* really incarnate and so could die.

My soul, as you take that bread into your fingers, remember that it is a thing to be handled and to be touched—a material substance. And so, God, the infinite, took into union with Himself actual flesh and blood, such as you have in your own body. A strange thing that a pure Spirit should descend to tabernacle in flesh—and yet it is so written—"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Oh, matchless mystery! He who fills all things became an infant of a span long. He who is eternal and omnipotent became a humble working-man, putting on the garment without seam, suffering, toiling, and at last yielding up His life. As each drop of wine shall pass your lips, and you do recognize it as a material substance, you show to yourself, O believer, that Jesus Christ became incarnate. Think you of this.

Take care that you do not make a God out of the manhood, nor a man out of the Godhead. Rest assured that as certainly as Christ was God, without diminution of His splendor, so certainly He was also man, pure man with a manhood like your own, even as He Himself said—"Handle me and see; a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see I have." See, then, brethren, your next of kin—a sufferer like yourselves—and let the bread and wine remind you of Him.

Then next, the supper *reminds you of your Lord's sufferings*. There is the bread broken. The wine, the juice of the grape, crushed out with pain and labor—poured out. Now remember that Jesus Christ, though not a bone of Him could be broken, was broken in spirit—"Reproach hath broken my heart; I am full of heaviness"—He poured out His soul unto death.

Let the bread and the wine remind you of the bloody sweat in the garden—of the anguish unto death which He endured in dark Gethsemane, amongst the olive trees. Let them bring to your recollection, beloved in the Lord, the scourging at the hands of Pilate and of Herod. Imagine you see Him standing patiently there, giving up His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair—hiding not His face from shame and spitting.

That bread broken and that wine poured out should remind you of the journey along the *Via Dolorosa*, as He went fainting beneath the burden of His cross. They must remind you of the cross and the nails, the grief of being forsaken, the anguish of thirst, and the bitterness of scorn, and the torment of fever, and at last, death itself.

I do not say that, perhaps you will be able to make the whole scene pass before your minds, but I bid you try to do so. Drive away every other thought, as Christ drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple. Charge your soul to stand with His Virgin Mother at the cross-foot and pray that His blood may fall upon you, drop by drop, that you may be so enchanted by what you see, withal so dreadful, but yet so full of bliss, that you may not dare for a moment to let a stray thought come in. This and this only, think of. Think of Jesus incarnate and of Jesus suffering.

But the bread and the wine show more than this. What do I see? Bread, the flesh. Wine, the life, the blood. Flesh and blood, then, when separated, are both dead so that the cup and the bread together distinctly signify the actual death of our Lord. There is no such thing as a Lord's Supper with the bread alone nor with the cup alone, nor with the bread and wine mingled. They must both be distinct. Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and until the blood has been poured forth, the flesh still remains and retains its life. But put the two distinctly, and you get the idea of death as clearly as you can have it.

Now, beloved, I want you to come close up to this truth, that the Lord of Glory actually died. For our Savior there was no passing into heaven by a chariot of fire. It is not said of Him, as of Enoch, that "He was not, for God took him," but He must die.

You dread death. You look forward to it frequently with trepidation. But Christ passed absolutely through it and the human soul and the human body of our Savior were rent from each other. He actually descended into the abodes of the dead. He bowed His head to the great enemy and yielded up the ghost. Had He not so died, there had been no ransom paid for you, for God's law demanded a life. The sentence was, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Christ has actually died—and let this Supper bring home the thought most sweetly to yourselves that Jesus died.

We have not yet shown Christ's death wholly to ourselves. *The spreading of that bread and wine on yonder table is a showing to ourselves that God has made a provision for human wants.* A hungry man coming to that table thinks at once of eating and drinking. He perceives that if it is placed there, it is placed there for use. Bread and wine in the cupboard may be stored, but bread and wine on the table are evidently for use.

Now, child of God, catch that thought and hold it. Jesus Christ has come into the world, not to withhold, but to give. Not to reserve, but to distribute. Not to keep to Himself any good thing, but to bestow all that He has upon His people. Come, then, with all your great necessities—come to the Savior, for He freely presents Himself to all believers.

Great Sinner, do you want great pardon? Jesus will give it to you. He puts on the table the cup. Do you want, Christian, great comfort? Come and take it—it is put on the table. Jesus keeps open house for all comers who come by faith to Him. Have you the faith to come and trust Him? Then all that Jesus is and has you may be and have.

Especially you that are His friends, you that have leaned upon His bosom—do not stint yourselves, for He does not stint you. You are not straitened in Him—if straitened at all, it is in yourselves. Jesus puts upon the table for us Himself, and being put there, it is as good as an open invitation by a loud voice, saying, "O, you hungry, come and feed! O, you thirsty, come and drink!" There is nothing in Christ which He will deny to His people. Christ has nothing in heaven or on earth which He will keep back from the believer that dares to come and ask for it. Come, then. Oh, come boldly! The Lord give you access unto this grace.

And do we not show the Lord's death a little further when, *after having spread the supper, we come to eat it?* Then we say to ourselves, "Just as I must eat this bread, or it will not nourish me, so must I take Jesus Christ personally, by a distinct act of faith and take Him to be mine. And as this bread, after I

have taken it, incorporates itself with me, so that there is no distinction between this bread and my body, but it helps to build up the structure of my body. So when I take Christ and trust Him, He becomes one with me, and I become one with Him, and my life is hid with Him. And He says that because He lives I shall live also."

Now, is not that a wonderful lesson to teach by so simple an action? You eat, you drink, the food becomes assimilated into yourselves. You come to Jesus, you trust Him, and Christ becomes one with you, and you become one with Him, so that henceforth you can say, "It is no more I that live, but Christ that liveth in me," and as for Jesus, He calls you a member of His body. He calls you a branch from His stem. He calls you the spouse and He Himself your Bridegroom. Oh, sacred union, effected by the act of reception which is the act of faith!

And now, beloved believer, as you first lived by receiving grace, you can only grow in that life by still receiving. Do not come to this table and say, "What can I bring?" No, but come and say, "What can I take away?" Do not say, "Am I worthy?" That question never ought to be asked. You are not worthy. But come, unworthy as you are, and take what Jesus has provided for unworthy sinners.

"Well," says someone, "but we are to take heed lest we eat and drink, being unworthy." No, you are not. There is no such text in all the Bible. You see, you have left out a syllable. What it does say is about eating and drinking unworthily—and that is with respect to the way of eating it. If you come to this table lightly—if you come to it irreligiously, profanely—if you come as they did at Corinth, to drink merely, if you come to get money by it, as some did in years gone by, to qualify themselves for office or to obtain charity—that would be to eat and drink unworthily. But unworthy as you are, if your

*"Hope is fixed on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness,"*

then come you hither, for such as you the table is spread.

And when you do come, I do pray you yet once more, *do not let unbelief keep you back from enjoying all that is to be enjoyed*. You know a very hungry man does not stand on many manners. If he is told to eat everything that is set before him, then his hunger does not permit him to stand on niceties, but he eats all he can get. And so may you.

Ay, and you may carry away what you will, too, with you. You may come and get a feast tonight and the sweet remembrance of it in days to come will be permitted to you. Do believe that Christ does not refuse you anything. When you pray, do not ask as if you were getting something out of a hard-hearted being, but come to One whose delight it is to give—whose very glory it is to scatter His mercies amongst His beloved ones.

*"Come, make your wants, your burdens known;
He will present them at the throne;
And angel-bands are waiting there,
His messages of love to bear."*

Thus, you see, in the bread and the wine, in the bread and wine separated, in the bread broken and the wine poured out, in the two emblems put on a table, and in these two being so partaken of that they become united with the fabric of our body—we set forth the whole mystery of the death of Jesus Christ to ourselves. May the Spirit of God help us to do this truly.

Observe now that—

II. WE ARE TO SHOW CHRIST'S DEATH TO OTHERS.

As often as we eat this bread and drink of this cup, we do this. We *show to others the fact that Jesus died*. I think historians have taken it as one of the best proofs of a fact when some rite has been instituted to commemorate it. A pillar with an inscription is not always a certain index to truth. Our own Monument, for instance, had a record on it that London was burned down by the Catholics—who had no

more to do with it, certainly, than the Muslims did. The inscription in that case was not a record of fact. Ay, and a pillar might be erected to record an event which never occurred at all.

But as a general rule, large bodies of men will not agree together to celebrate continually events which never occurred. Nobody doubts, I suppose, the siege of Londonderry, when the 'prentice boys meet every year to make a noise and disturbance. They at least bring before the historian's mind the certainty that such an event did occur, for it is still thus recorded.

Now, our Lord gave us this simple method of breaking bread and drinking wine to be our way of setting up our pillar—our mode of keeping up a great historical fact—that there was a Man who lived in Judea, who professed to be the Son of God, who was the King of the Jews, who lived a humble life and died a marvelous death. There is no fact in history so well attested as this. So that those who have given up the inspiration of Scripture have seldom touched either the life or the death of Jesus, but have conceded both to be facts.

And now this very night, perhaps, in fifty thousand places, at this moment, this commemorative act of eating bread and drinking wine is about to be performed in this one country of England. Now that is something by way of record, and by this act we help to perpetuate to all generations the fact that Jesus died.

But we do a great deal more than this to others. We assert by coming here tonight, and eating this bread and drinking of this cup, *that we believe that this man, Jesus of Nazareth, was the Son of God and the Savior of men, and that we go in with Him for everything that is involved in the story of His life and death.*

That is to say, if it be a shame for Christ to die upon the cross, we are willing to bear part of the shame. If it be thought to be foolishness to believe in a crucified man—we are fools and come here to avow it. If it be said to be a stumbling block to many that Jesus of Nazareth should be the Son of God—we come to declare that it is no stumbling block to us. We accept Him as divine. We trust in Him as the propitiation for our sins.

Beloved, when you shall take that bread, you take part with Christ. You take lot with Him and mark you, He goes up the bleak side of the hill often—and you will have to do the same, with the snow between your teeth. And He often lodges in huts and hovels—yea, He has not where to lay His head. He has handfuls of the world's filth thrown at Him and but little of its gold laid at His feet. He is despised and rejected of men—and if you will keep Him company, you must expect to be despised, too, and to get as ill-treated as He had—for the servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord.

Whoever follows David must go to him in the wild goat tracks of Engedi, or dwell with him in the Cave of Adullam. He that would be David's man must share David's want and David's disgrace, or else he cannot share his crown. Believers, have you counted this cost? You professors who come to this table and who say to the onlookers, "We go with Christ. We are enlisted under His banner. We have given ourselves to Him"—have we counted the cost?

"Have you counted the cost? Have you counted the cost

Ye followers of the cross?

And are you prepared for your Master's sake

To suffer all worldly loss.

And can you endure with the virgin band,

The lowly and pure in heart,

Who whithersoever the Lamb doth lead,

From His footsteps ne'er depart?"

Oh! that so counting the cost, you may continue with Him till life's journey is over. Thus, you see, you not only assert that Christ died, but you communicants assert that He died for you and that you are one with Him, and will take shares with Him when He comes into His kingdom.

You do even more than that. *You explain the meaning of Christ's death by the mere fact of coming to this table.* "How," say you, "is that?" In eating the bread and drinking the wine, you set forth a sacrifice—a libation of blood and a slaughter of flesh—and you say to all the world, "Our trust for salvation rests in a sacrifice. We have no hope of being saved by anything that springs of ourselves—we look wholly out of self and entirely to the sacrifice which was offered up on the cross."

While some of you sit down to the table, others of you will be onlookers. I do pray you, as you look on, if you have never known this truth before, learn it now. All your hope of ever entering heaven must lie quite out of yourselves and be concentrated in another—in God's only and own dear Son. While I am stating this fact, which is so well known to you that it sounds commonplace, I feel as if I could burst into a flood of tears, to think that it should grow so commonplace and yet be not believed.

Does God become man and die, and will you not trust Him? Does my God, that made the heavens and the earth, of whom I read that without Him was not anything made that was made—does He become a man and suffer that sinners might live? And is it nothing to you, is it nothing to you, and will you prefer the tawdry pleasures of this world to the solid bliss which He can give you?

And will you dash yourselves upon the bosses of JEHOVAH'S buckler and run upon His glittering spear, and ruin yourselves forever, rather than close in with Christ and kiss the Son lest He be angry? I can understand why it is that you do not love my Lord, for once I was so foolish myself, but oh! it is brutish—it is worse than that, it is devilish to despise a dying Christ.

I know not whether I have not vilified the devil in using his name in such a matter as that, for surely, had Jesus died for devils, they would not have been such devils as men are who, hearing of a Savior and believing the story of His passion, yet turn a deaf ear to it and give their souls up to Madame Wanton, or to base-born Mammon, or to some other carnal thing which will but delude and destroy them.

There are some of you I shall never see again. I charge you before the Eternal God, as we shall meet at His last judgment seat, do think of this—that if it is worth God's while to come here, and be incarnate, and so to suffer, to make atonement, it is not a thing for you to trifle with. Or if you do, you will find that the stone which you refused will grind you to powder in that day when, like some cliff that is loosened from its socket, long quivering there, it shall come rolling down upon the heedless traveler to crush him and utterly destroy him.

God save you, my dear hearer, stranger to me, and stranger to yourself, and stranger to my God. And though you may remain a stranger to me, yet may you begin to know something of yourself tonight, and something of my Master, of whom I will say this one thing—if you did but know Him you would love Him.

*"His worth if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole world would love Him too."*

Thus, then, do we show the fact of our participation in Christ's death and the meaning of it.

Does not the voice of ages and of generations after generations speak to you now in the constancy and frequency of this celebration? And do you not perceive that we move forward to the boundary which shall realize the church's hope? "We do show the Lord's death till he come."

Then He is coming. He is coming. I know not when, no, nor know the angel of God that is nearest to the Eternal Book when God unfolds the leaves. But He is coming. As when the earthquake comes, with divers signs and prodigies that make men start, and yet they know not what it is, He comes. As the lightning flash that is seen from east to west, He comes. As the thief that steals silently through the shadows of the night and robs the sleeper, so He comes.

The Man that wore the thorn-crown is coming, with a crown about His brow more glorious than all the coronets of earth. He is coming. The Son of Mary is coming, to wear no more the garment without seam, but wrapped

"With rainbow wreath and robes of storm."

He is coming. The Man that did hang upon a cross will sit upon the great white throne—

*“On cherub wings and wings of wind,
Appointed Judge of all mankind.”*

And you said tonight—you said it and I heard you—that you crucified Him and you said that yours were the hands that drove the nails and made the hammer fall. You sang just now—

“’Tis I have thus ungrateful been.”

Now you have confessed it. You, who have trusted in Him will confess it, and yet, thank God that out of a fault springs your salvation. But you who have not trusted Him, what will you say to Him in that day when He shall come to judge the world? You shall look on Him whom you have pierced, and you shall weep and wail because of Him.

Oh! that you would look at His wounds now and trust Him, for if you do not you shall look on them then, and you shall say, “I made those wounds.” And that thought will shake you as when a lion shakes his prey. That thought will melt your bones as though they were but ice in the heat of the sun, and your loins shall be loosed, and your soul shall sink in dismay.

I pray you—I beseech you, by the love you bear to yourself, and to your soul that can never die—look unto Jesus and be saved. Look unto Him now. You must look one day—look tonight. You must look, either with repentance and faith, or else with terror and despair. Choose which it shall be. Choose you now.

Young men and women who have stepped in here tonight, I pray God that you may have grace to decide for Jesus now. Old men and fathers, maidens and matrons, may you have grace also to say, “I will take Him as my Savior, not as my Judge.”

*“But if your ears refuse
The language of His grace,
And hearts grow hard like stubborn Jews,
That unbelieving race.*

*The Lord in anger drest,
Shall lift His hand and swear,
‘You that despise My promised rest
Shall have no portion there.’”*

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

EZEKIEL 36:16-38

Verses 16-20. *Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: and I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, these are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.*

All through Scripture we are told that God has great regard to the honor of His holy name. “The LORD thy God is a jealous God.” And this is no small blessing to us, for it has so happened that, when

there has been no other reason for mercy, God's regard to His own name has found Him a reason for dealing mercifully with His unbelieving, undeserving people.

See how He had scattered His chosen people. He had sent them away into captivity, justly, on account of their sins. But it came to pass that wherever they went, whether it was into Persia or Babylonia, the people said, "These are JEHOVAH'S people. These are JEHOVAH'S people and they are gone forth out of His land." What was the consequence of this?

21. *But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.*

He had pity for His own name. He had a reverence and esteem for His own renown and standing, even among these heathen nations.

22-23. *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus says the LORD GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen which ye have profaned in the midst of them: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD saith the LORD GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.*

Brethren, what must God think of a nation like to ours which has come to be called by His name, albeit it so little deserves that great honor? What, I say, must He think of the fact that if there are any vices yet unknown, white men will teach them to the heathen, and when the heathen have heard the Gospel, the great sources of doubt are the white men—Englishmen.

Full often the greatest oppressors will spring out of our own nation. Certainly we hold the belt for drunkenness, and where our fellow countrymen go the name of Christianity is rendered base among the heathen. The Mohammedan says of such a man, "He has been drunk and turned a Christian." I will grant that much that is said is said unwisely, and untruthfully, and slanderously in exaggeration, for these men are no Christians. They know not the Lord.

It is not a Christian country—it is a heathen country, as some of us know, not only by what we read, but by what we see and hear. Can you walk the streets without hearing blasphemies more black than might be heard in any streets under heaven? This is a heathen country, but yet it has somehow come to be thought to be a Christian country, and therefore its conduct is bringing dishonor upon the name of the Most High.

Oh! that He would have pity upon that name and interpose, and once more establish the truth and set up a throne of righteousness, and turn the hearts of the people to Himself in this country! Oh! that it were so, for His great name's sake! He cannot bless us for our own sakes, for we deserve nothing but His wrath—but oh! that He would once again have pity upon His holy name that is profaned, and bless this our land.

The Lord goes on to say concerning His people—

24. *For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.*

Now, this stands true of Israel after the flesh. It will assuredly be fulfilled in the latter days. But it stands even more certain concerning Israel, the true Israel, of whom the natural Israel is but the type. Now, we read one form of that new covenant made with God concerning His elect, comprehending all that have believed in Christ, or ever shall believe in Him. This is the covenant that He makes with us in these days—

25-26. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

Here is, first of all, full justification. "From all your filthiness will I cleanse you." And here is next regeneration—"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." These are unconditional promises of that covenant which He has made with His redeemed in the person of Christ

Jesus, their covenant head. See how majestically it is worded—"I will" and "You shall." There is not an "if" or a "but" all through it.

27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Here is sanctification. Here is final perseverance. Blessed promises of the covenant of grace.

28. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers: and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

That is the greatest promise of all. If a man were to preach a series of sermons upon this text during every day in the year, he would never exhaust the fullness of its meaning. "Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

29. I will also save you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.

And spiritually, how true this is—that whenever God saves us from sin, He also saves us from every form of famine. No heart was ever left to hunger and thirst in vain when it was cleansed from its sin. Our wants come out of our sins, but when we walk with God, He lays no famine upon us in spiritual things.

30. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.

"Then," when I have blessed you thus—when I have fully saved you, when I have brought you up from all the places where I have scattered you, when I have enriched you and indulged you with My love—

31. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

Repentance is not the root of grace, but the lily-like flower of it. It is not a thing for the early morning of Christian life alone. Repentance will go side by side with faith all through the ways of righteousness, till we get to Heaven Gate. It is when we have most of mercy that we have most loathing for sin.

*"Law and terrors do but harden
All the while they work alone:
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Soon dissolves a heart of stone."*

32. Not for your sakes do I do this, saith the LORD GOD be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

There is no man saved for his own sake. There is no man redeemed for his own sake. It is for God's own glory's sake. There is no motive so high—there is none so worthy of God, as the making known to all generations and all realms the majesty of His love and the faithfulness of His covenant.

33-36. Thus saith the LORD GOD: In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate; I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.

Now, as He will do this, I doubt not, in Palestine, in due season, so does He always make the most desolate places to be built when His people live near to Him. Let us have courage, brethren, about London, about England, about the world. It is very wicked, but if we will keep close to God, we are able to overcome this wickedness in Christ's name.

Let us have comfort about these evil days in which the most of men seem to be departing from the Gospel. We can "hold the fort" till Christ shall come—let us but have courage. God will give us yet to

see better and brighter days. He was thought to be a good citizen who never despaired of his country and he is a good Christian who never indulges a dreary thought about the ultimate triumph of Christ and the coming of His kingdom—"for thine is the kingdom," even now, "and the power and the glory," and so shall it be, forever and ever.

37. *Thus says the LORD GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.*

There must be the spirit of prayer and supplication poured out first. We shall see Israel restored to her land when Israel is restored to the mercy seat—and we shall see great prosperity as a church, and the blessing of God will rest upon our nation, when once God's people go up to the top of Carmel with their faces between their knees, and cry, and cry, and cry again, expecting that yet the heavenly shower shall end this long drought of the curse—and the blessing shall come. "I will yet be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them."

38. *As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am the LORD.*

And that is the great end of it all—to make men know that the I AM is—that the true and real God is still potent among the sons of men and does His will both here and among the armies of heaven. Unto His name be glory forever and ever.

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